

The Safe Use of Ladders and Step Ladders



Ver: 0418

Key Legislation

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 - **employers** must provide:

- safe equipment and safe systems of work
- a safe workplace
- the necessary Instruction, Training, Information and Supervision

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 - **employees** must:

- take care of their own safety and that of others
- use equipment according to instructions and as per training



The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) – ladders must be:

- suitable for the work they are provided to do and where they are to be used
- maintained and inspected
- used only by employees who have had the appropriate training
- provided with the necessary information to ensure their safe use

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 – requires that:

- users of step ladders are competent
- the correct equipment is selected and used correctly
- a risk assessment has established that a more suitable type of equipment is not required because of **the low risk**; the **short duration of use**; or **features that cannot be altered**.



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Do

- ✓ select the correct size for the job
- ✓ check for damage before use
- ✓ tag, isolate and report a damaged ladder
- ✓ where possible, face the task on a stepladder
- ✓ wear appropriate, sensible footwear
- ✓ position on a firm and level base
- ✓ set up at the correct angle – 1 out for every 4 up
- ✓ ensure the treads are not contaminated
- ✓ fully engage restraint devices
- ✓ only use Class 1 or EN131 (old and new standards) classes of ladder
- ✓ have someone footing or bracing if necessary
- ✓ maintain 3 points of contact whenever possible



Do not

- ✗ use a ladder that is too small for the task
- ✗ use a damaged ladder
- ✗ work side on (where possible)
- ✗ overload it – consider persons and materials
- ✗ overreach – keep your body inside the stiles
- ✗ stand on handrails or climb too high – stop climbing when the top of the ladder is at waist height (or according to manufacturer)
- ✗ use on soft ground
- ✗ use behind doors (without taking precautions)
- ✗ use where they could be struck by vehicles
- ✗ use where pedestrians are forced to walk under them
- ✗ use Class 3 domestic ladders or steps at work
- ✗ stand with your back to the rungs



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As a guide

- only use in one position for a maximum of 30 minutes
- only use for light work only
- only use where a handhold is available